

Missionary Faces Nearly Impossible Choice

Gospel for Asia-supported missionary Zaafer Patel must choose between turning his back on a group of new believers or forcing them to be denied access to food and water.

Zaafer is pastor of a small church in a remote, tribal area of South Asia. Two ethnic groups make up the majority of the people in his village, and both of these groups are adamant followers of a traditional Asian religion. The village leaders are upset that so many of their friends and neighbors have chosen to follow Christ and worship at Zaafer's church. They accused him of plotting to turn everyone in the village away from their former religion and to Christianity.

The village leaders gave Zaafer an ultimatum: Leave the village or all the Christians will be banished from the local wells and from purchasing items at the village shops. The local people have promised to ostracize the Christian families as well. Zaafer has also been threatened with physical harm if he stays.

The village is currently celebrating one of its most popular religious festivals, and the leaders told Zaafer that he must leave by the time the festival ends on March 24.

Zaafer asks for prayer that the Christians in this village will be kept safe and that the leaders would soften their hearts toward the message of God's love and refuse to carry out the threats they've made.

He also asked for prayer for his accusers that God would have mercy on them and reveal His love to them.